

A FAIR WOMAN AND A WILD PLOT

REAL STORIES FROM THE LIFE OF A MASTER ADVENTURER

by CAPTAIN GEORGE B. BOYNTON

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Editor's Note—Capt. George B. Boynton died a few months ago in Brooklyn. He served, all told, under eighteen flags and his life has furnished much material for fiction. This is a story of some of his adventures told by himself for the first time.

NEAR the close of 1889 I was seized with a freak of fancy to visit Cairo, the ancient capital of the kings of Egypt—those glorious old marauding monarchs who made despotism a fine art, and graft a religion.

Under my British name of George MacFarlane I stopped at Shepherds' Hotel, then the home of all pilgrims, and gave myself up to the enjoyment of new scenes. It was at the height of the tourist season, following the Christmas holidays, and there was an abundance of company, made of cultured Europeans and a few Americans of gentle birth, for that was before Cairo was overrun with the over-rich. The time was delightfully whiled away for a month before anything happened to indicate the reason for my being there, but within less than half of that time I had renewed acquaintance with the man who was really the key to the situation, though I did not suspect it at the time.

He and I had been strangely thrown together some years before under conditions which provoked rather an intimate knowledge of each other, and when we met on the street one day the recognition was instant and mutual. He did not inquire into my business, but simply asked what name I was traveling under, in order that he might not embarrass me. He stood in close and confidential relation to Tewfik Pasha, the Khedive, and on that account it is best that there should be no hint, even now, as to his name.

As I was enjoying my after-dinner cigar one evening in a quiet corner of the garden in front of the hotel I was approached by three women peddlers, apparently of the fellah class. They wore the common blue kimona-like garment, held together seemingly by luck, and their small black veils were thrown over their heads, leaving their faces bare and thus placing them outside the pale of Egyptian respectability. I was about to walk away to avoid their pestering when my eyes met those of the one who was in the lead, and instantly I was attracted in place of being repelled.

Her sparkling eyes, turned full on me and ignoring all else, told me as plainly as words could have done that she had some message for me, and, suspecting that the moment for which I had been waiting for weeks had arrived, I walked slowly toward her, as though in a mood to barter. As we met, seemingly somewhat disconcerted by my steady gaze of profound and uncommoded admiration, she drew her unconvincing veil across her face and held out her hands, like one trained to tourist trade, that I might examine her wonderful rings. Those hands could never have known work. They were so soft and small, and arms more perfectly rounded were never modeled in marble by a master. Plainly this woman was not of the servant class, to which her companions so clearly belonged.

One of her hands was half closed, and as she laid it in mine it opened and a small piece of folded paper fell into my palm. Long accustomed to ways out of the ordinary, I gave no sign beyond an involuntary start which she felt, but no one else noticed, and proceeded, with much deliberation, to select a ring which I purchased as a souvenir of our first meeting. Not a word passed between us except as to the price of the ring, over which there was no bargaining.

The women who were with her made a pretense of showing me their wares, but it was only a show for the benefit of any inquisitive persons who might be watching and, without regard to me, they passed on.

Curious as to the contents of the communication which had come to me so strangely, but fearful of being watched by I knew not whom, it was some time before I went to my room to read the note by the light of a tallow candle. The mysterious message read:

"You are Captain Boynton. Are you willing to undertake a difficult and perhaps dangerous mission? Answer tomorrow night through the channel by which you receive this."

Here was a romantic promise of something new and real in the way of excitement, for I could imagine nothing stereotyped growing out of such an unusual beginning, and I rejoiced. Inasmuch as the only man in Cairo who knew me as Captain Boynton, and who was acquainted with my favorite occupation, was a confidant of the Khedive, it naturally occurred to me that the only Tewfik Pasha was mixed up in it some way, and I suspected that it involved another secret movement against British rule in Egypt. The latter suspicion was soon verified, and there never has been any doubt in my own mind that I was equally correct in the conjecture as to the participation, or at least the silent approval, of Tewfik.

The next evening, before going down to dinner, I wrote my reply:

"Yes, provided it is something a gentleman can do, and I am well paid for it. But I will conduct no negotiations in this way. I must see the people I am doing business with."

After dinner I retired to the same out-of-the-way corner of the garden in which I had been found the night before, to await developments. It probably was not long, but it seemed hours



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before the same three women came up the short flight of steps running down to the street. As on the night before, it was left to Ialla to barter with me. I again took both of her hands in mine, to examine her jewelry, and as I did so I slipped into one of them the tightly folded note which I had been grip-

ping for an hour or more.

Her jewels were much richer than those she had worn the previous evening, and as I studied their barbaric beauty I softly pressed her childish hands as the only means of conveying something of the impression she had made on me, for I did not know the extent to which the other women were in our secret or could be trusted. Her only response was one quick glance, which I interpreted as a mixture of pleasure, surprise and interrogation; the one distinctly pleasant thing about it was that it contained nothing of indignation or hostility.

There was no sign of either Ialla or her two friends the next evening, though I watched for them closely. On the second afternoon I received a call from my old friend, who undoubtedly had vouched for me to the people who had opened up the exceedingly interesting correspondence. It was apparently a casual visit, but its purpose was revealed when, in the course of a general conversation regarding the country and its ways, along which he had cleverly piloted me, he said:

"These Egyptians are a remarkable people. I have lived among them long enough to know them and to admire, particularly, their sublime religious faith and their exalted sense of honor. With their enemies, and with the travelers on whom they prey, they are tricky and evasive to the last degree, but in their dealings with people whom they know and trust they are the most honorable men in the world. I don't know whether you expect to have any dealings with them, but if you do, you can trust them absolutely."

With that opening I was on the point of speaking to him about the note I had received and answered, but before I could say a word he had started off on another subject, leaving me to understand that he knew all about the matter but did not wish to talk of it, and that he had taken that method, learned from the diplomats, of endorsing the people with whom he had put me in communication. I took my accustomed seat in the garden that evening, impatient for further unfoldings. I had not been waiting long when Ialla and her two companions appeared and came straight toward me, but without any sign of recognition. As she passed closely beside me, walking slowly, Ialla whispered, almost in my ear:

"Follow me at ten o'clock!"

A few minutes before ten I descended into the street to wait for them, so it could not be seen from the hotel that I was following them. Promptly on the hour Ialla and her attendants came down the steps and set off toward Old Cairo.

They led me almost the full length of the Moosha, turned into one of the narrow side streets, then into another and another until they stopped at last in front of a door at the side of one of the little shops.

When I was within perhaps fifty feet of them Ialla entered the door, after looking back at me, while her four companions walked rapidly on down the street. I pushed open the door, which was immediately closed by a servant who dropped a bar across it, and found Ialla waiting for me in a dimly lighted hallway. She led me nearly to the end of the long hall, opened a door and motioned to me to enter, and closed the door from the outside. I found myself in a large room, which, after my eyes had become accustomed to the half-light, I saw was magnificently furnished. A fine-looking old Arab, with gray hair and beard, was seated on an ottoman, smoking a bubble-pipe. His bearing was majestic, and for the purpose of

easy identification he will be known here as Regal, though that was not his name.

"I am glad to see you, Boynton Pasha," was his greeting, in a deep, strong voice. He proved himself a man of action and advanced himself greatly in my esteem by giving no time to idle chatter. "We know you well," he said, "through trustworthy information, as a soldier and a sailor, and we believe you are peculiarly well equipped for the work we wish you to undertake. It is a sea-going expedition, involving danger of disaster on one hand and the course of liberty and a substantial reward on the other. Are you willing to attempt it?"

"If you are open to reasonable terms and I am given full command of the expedition I will gladly undertake it," I replied. "If it furnishes real adventure I will be quite willing to accept that in part payment for my services."

Without further ceremony he let me into the whole plot. At the bottom of it was the old cry of "Egypt for the Egyptians," which is not yet dead and probably will not die for centuries, if ever. It was Arabi Pasha who had made the last desperate fight under this slogan, and it was his release from exile that was sought by the plotters, in order that he could renew the war for native liberty.

Through spies it had been learned that Arabi was confined at a point near the coast only a short distance from Colombo, the capital of Ceylon. He was allowed considerable freedom, within certain prescribed limits, and was in the custody of only a small guard. His escape was regarded as impossible, and the idea that an attempt might be made to rescue him seemingly never entered the minds of those responsible for his safe-keeping.

Yet that was precisely what I was asked to accomplish.

I promptly assured the old patriot, whose anxiety and excitement were shown in his blazing eyes, that I would cheerfully assume responsibility for Arabi's rescue and his safe delivery at almost any point that might be designated.

With a gesture which indicated that everything was settled in his mind and that it was necessary for me only to name my terms to have them agreed to, Regal said he anticipated no difficulty on that point and suggested that I return the next afternoon or evening to meet his associates, the inner circle of the revolutionary party.

Regal was waiting for me and with him were five of his countrymen.

It was urged by them and agreed that I should take no part in the actual rescue of Arabi, but remain on the ship to guard against any surprise by water and to be ready to steam westward as soon as the party returned. I was to stand in close to the shore just after dark, with all lights doused, and it was thought that Arabi would be safe on board long before sunrise so that we could be well clear of the land by daybreak.

When I finally started back to my hotel Ialla and her attendants were waiting for me in the alley, for it was not wide enough to be called a street. They started on ahead, but we had gone only a few short blocks when her four companions walked briskly away and she waited for me in a deep shadow.

"How did your business turn out?" she inquired anxiously, as I bowed low before her. Her voice, which I had been longing to hear, was soft and clear, as well as became her, and her radiant beauty alone shone forth through the darkness.

"Thanks to your cleverness," I replied, "it has turned out well."

"Then you are going to rescue my uncle?" she exclaimed delightedly. Her sparkling eyes flamed with excitement and, as if to seal the compact, she extended her hand, which I first pressed and then kissed. Then I slipped it through my arm and started to walk, out of the shadow into the moonlight, and she accompanied me without protest. We walked long and talked much, and some of it was interesting.

The next night I found my way alone to Regal's abode and received the first payment of 20,000 pounds, in Paris exchange. There was a final conference, and I took my departure with many good wishes. Ialla and her two women attendants were waiting for me, as had been arranged, and my love-making was resumed where I had left off on the pre-

ceding night. Ialla was more responsive than before, but when I urged her to go with me to France or marry me at once in Cairo she would not listen. Finally she said: "After you have rescued my uncle I will go with you anywhere, but not until then will I think of marriage."

Nothing could move her from that decision. I arranged to meet her the next night and the one following, and several others, which she accomplished by the popular method of bribing her attendants, but though it was a joy to her to be told of my love, there was no way by which she could be induced to yield to it until her uncle was free.

I went to Marseilles and, after looking over several ships that were for sale, bought L'Hirondelle, a coasting steamer of 800 tons.

At Suakin one of the great surprises of my life awaited me. We had scarcely tied up when the man from whom I was to receive the warriors came aboard with a letter from Regal directing me to turn the ship over to him and discharge the crew. The agent could not understand the change of plan any more than I could, and I could not even guess as to the cause, but he was there to obey orders, and there was nothing else for me to do. Feeling sure there would be a satisfactory explanation waiting for me at Cairo, I returned there, after paying off the crew and sending them back to Marseilles and London in charge of Leigh and Wilson.

I was still more mystified when, on reaching Cairo, I was unable to find Regal, Ialla or any one else connected with the undertaking, nor could I get the slightest trace of them.

In the hope of seeing Ialla again, and determined to secure some definite clue as to just what had happened in my absence, I waited around for two weeks or more, until I encountered the old friend who, I knew, was responsible for my connection with the conspiracy. I did not dissemble, as I had before, but took him to my room, told him the riddle and asked him the answer. I did not expect him to admit anything and was not disappointed. He said, in substance:

"Of course I know nothing about the plot of which you have told me. If what you say is true, I should say that you have been making something of a fool of yourself over this Ialla and that you have only yourself to blame for the abrupt ending which seems to have been reached. These women are the greatest fiends in the world."

"You thought Ialla was in love with you, but she was only having a good time with you, and she has taken a lot of pride in telling her friends about your meetings, at their afternoon gatherings for the exchange of gossip. She had no idea of marrying you, an unbelieved, you can be sure. It may be she thought she was stimulating you to deeds of heroism, but, if she considered that at all, it was a secondary matter."

"The men you were dealing with have the contempt of their race for all women. They can not understand how any man can become so enamored of a woman, no matter how beautiful, as to let it interfere with his business."

"They would argue that no man who could be relied on to carry out their plan would display such lack of judgment. It is possible that there may be some other reason for the situation in which you find yourself, but I doubt it. The wisest course for you is to tell me how you can be reached, and leave Cairo, for you can gain nothing by staying here. It is known to many people that I know you, and if any one should be able to tell him how to do it."

Possessing all the pride of a full-blooded man, I resented the calm assertion that I had been ensnared by a flirt, but, in looking back at it now, I am willing to admit that probably my friend was right about it.

Feeling that for once my destiny had played it a bit low down on me, I crossed the Mediterranean and took a French liner for New York. Eleven years later Arabi was pardoned and returned to Egypt, but his influence among his own people was gone; the fact that he had accepted a pardon implied, to their astute minds, a secret agreement with their enemies and caused him to be regarded as a tool of the British. But, the fires of freedom are still burning, and now and again signal-smoke is seen rising over India.

that, they thought out in Columbus that the editor of a morning paper there rather rubbed it in in a short account of a political meeting at which John was the speaker. This was the paragraph: "John L. Latta addressed a meeting of the Democratic voters of the Ninth ward last night and this morning."—Saturday Evening Post.

During 'enp year a great many bachelors of mature years get married—probably because of the many young widows on the job.

More Marathon Oratory.

John J. Latta of Ohio is celebrated as a long-distance orator; but, for all

huge size and vivid colors, many-hued clusters of them hanging in trails. It was the death orchid.

When he recovered his senses, he found himself being carried back to camp where the rest of his porters had remained. Many of the band were severely sick, and many half-witted, with the continued effect of the scene.

Suburban Life.

Satisfies

There never was a thirst that Coca-Cola couldn't satisfy. It goes, straight as an arrow, to the dry spot. And besides this,

Coca-Cola

satisfies to a T the call for something purely delicious and deliciously pure—and wholesome.

Our new bottle, selling of Coca-Cola, is a violation of the law, for the sake of the law.

Free

Demand the Genuine as made by THE COCA-COLA CO. ATLANTA, GA.

EVERY CHILD SHOULD HAVE THE Faultless Starch Twin Dolls

Miss Lily White and Miss Phoebe Prim.

If you will use the best starch made both of these dolls, each 2 1/2 inches high, and ready to wear, on your next laundry day, you will receive a pair of Faultless Starch Twin Dolls, or two dolls of 6 cent Faultless Starch packages, or 6 cent dolls will be sent on receipt of three 10 cent Faultless Starch packages, or 6 cent dolls will be sent on receipt of three 10 cent Faultless Starch packages, or 6 cent dolls will be sent on receipt of three 10 cent Faultless Starch packages.

FAULTLESS STARCH CO., Kansas City, Mo.

RECORD OF TIME'S CHANGES SOLACE IN HIS MISFORTUNE

Surely Visitor to the Scene of His Boyhood Could Not Fail to Be Impressed.

"I reckon you see the old town looking some different from what it looked when you left it thirty years ago," said Uncle Eb Skinner to the native returning for a visit to the scenes of his boyhood. "All o' the back part o' Peavy's store is new since your day here, an' that bay window in the drug store was put in since you left us. The doop used to be painted yellow instid o' red, an' the town hall is bet by steam now instid o' with stoves, like it used to be in your time. Them two iron hitch posts in front o' the postoffice ain't been there more than ten years, and that stone watering trough instid o' the old wooden one you remember is another change. I reckon you've noticed that H. Greene has raised his house a story an' added a summer kitchen. That piazza in front o' the hotel is another change in the old town, an', of course, you've noticed the new horse sheds back o' the church, an' the broom shop w'n't here when you was a boy with us. It employs five hands reglar, an' seven in the rush season. Time makes changes, as I reckon you have seen."

—From Judge.

Entombed Miner Had at Least One Pleasant Thought After Two Days of Suffering.

Miners are among the most heroic people in the world. Danger is always beside them, and they are schooled to believe that any time they will come face to face with death. The result of this is that they are humorous in their boldness.

In one of the mines of Pennsylvania there was a cave-in which imprisoned a miner named Jack Thornton. The accident happened on Friday afternoon, and the fellow laborers of the entombed man set to work at once to dig him out. It was not until Sunday morning, however, that they reached his prison chamber, and by this time they were wondering whether he had been suffocated or starved to death. One of them stuck his head through the aperture made by the picks of the rescuers and called out:

"Jack, are you all right?"

"All right," came the reply, and then after a pause: "What day is this?"

"Sunday!" exclaimed the friend.

"Gee!" exclaimed Jack. "I'm glad of that. That was one Saturday night when those saloonkeepers didn't get my wages."—Popular Magazine.

WAS SORRY FOR HIM.



Janitor—Stop playing that trombone; the man in the next room says he can't read.

Dinkheimer—Ach, vot ignorance! I could read ven I was five years old!

They Are Overworked Now.

Four-year-old Dick had made an important discovery that his hair would pull out if enough force was exerted, and was absorbed in proving the fascinating find on his forehead. His sister—aged seven—noted the proceedings with round-eyed horror.

"Dickie! Dickie!" she cried, "you mustn't do that!"

"Why?" demanded Dickie, with the cynicism of childhood.

"Because the Bible says that all your hairs are numbered—and if you pull any out you'll make a lot of extra bookkeeping for the angels."

Shock for a Brother.

"John," said an eminent physician, wearily, entering his home after a hard day's work, "John, if anyone calls excuse me."

"Yes, sub," agreed John, the old family doctor.

"Just say," explained the doctor, "that the masser is with me."

A little later the doctor's brother called—called and received the shock of his life.

"I want to see the doctor at once," said he.

"Yuh can't do it, sub," solemnly announced the old doctor, turning up his eyes till the whites alone showed.

"Yuh can't do it, sub. The doctor, sub, am wid de Messiah."—New York Evening Sun.

It is not easy to be a widow; one must resume all the modesty of girlhood without being allowed even to feign ignorance. —Mme. De Girardin.

The wagon tongue goes without saying.

Death Orchid of Venezuela

Veteran Seeker After Strange Flowers Has Proved Truth of Legend of Long Standing.

The death orchid of the Venezuelan Andes has been proved to be no mere campfire yarn.

Three years ago, an orchid hunter, Grayson, set out to find "El Lugar de las Flores Venenosas," that is, "The Place of the Poisonous Flowers."

which was said to be located in the dense and pathless wilderness occupying the vast stretches between the headwaters of the Orinoco and the Andes. Two weeks passed without any incident out of the ordinary. But one morning there was a perceptible smell of flowers in the air. When the orchid hunter and his Indians camped that night, the jungle smells had been entirely lost in the "dying" scent

of the band refused to go further. As Grayson and the others proceeded, the rankly sweet and oppressive odor became stronger, attacking the senses like a narcotic. One after another the remaining Indians collapsed, till only Grayson and the guide were left, pushing onward. The orchid hunter felt as if he was being attacked by the insidious power of opium, but retained enough consciousness to become aware that, gleaming through the trees ahead, he saw flowers of

huge size and vivid colors, many-hued clusters of them hanging in trails. It was the death orchid.

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